

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A Mannich base characterized in that it is prepared using at least one phenolic compound of the formula (I)

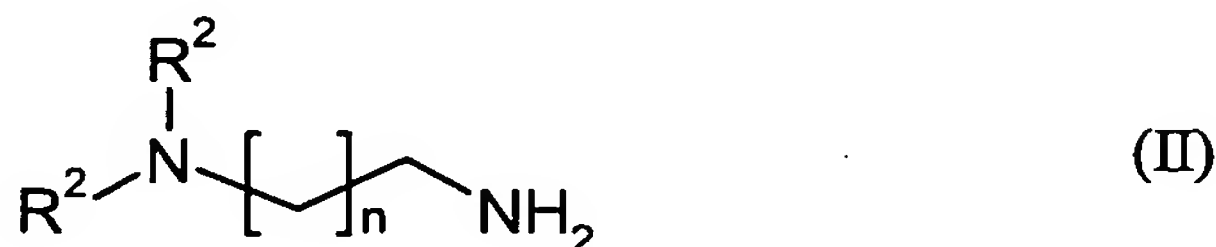


with  $R^1 = H$  or  $CH_3$

and also formaldehyde and at least one polyamine.

2. (Original) The Mannich base as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it is prepared by reacting in a first stage at least one phenolic compound of the formula (I) with formaldehyde in the presence of a tertiary amine and in a subsequent stage carrying out reaction with at least one polyamine.

3. (Original) The Mannich base as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the tertiary amine has the formula (II)



with  $R^2 = C_1-C_6$  alkyl and  $n = 1, 2, \text{ or } 3$ .

4. (Currently Amended) The Mannich base as claimed in ~~either of claims 2 and 3~~ claim 2, characterized in that in the first stage the formaldehyde is added to a mixture of the phenolic compound of formula (I) and the tertiary amine.
5. (Currently Amended) The Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that in formula (I)  $R^1 = H$ .

6. (Currently Amended) The Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 3 to 5~~claim 3, characterized in that in formula (II)  $R^2 = CH_3$ .

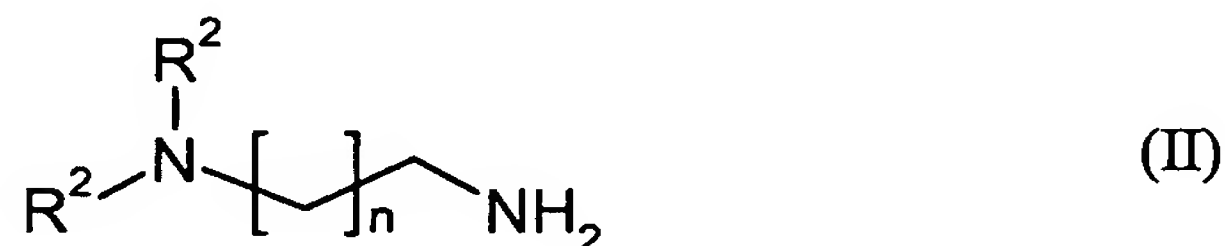
7. (Currently Amended) The Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~claim 3, characterized in that in formula (II)  $n = 2$ .

8. (Currently Amended) The Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in that the viscosity at 25°C is less than 1000 mPas, and in particular is in the range between 200 and 700 mPas.

9. (Original) A process for preparing a Mannich base, characterized in that in a first stage at least one phenolic compound is reacted with formaldehyde in the presence of a tertiary amine and in a subsequent stage reaction takes place with at least one polyamine.

10. (Original) The process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that in the first stage the formaldehyde is added to a mixture of the phenolic compound and the tertiary amine.

11. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in ~~either of claims 9 and 10~~claim 9, characterized in that the tertiary amine has the formula (II)



with  $R^2 = C_1-C_6$  alkyl and  $n = 1, 2$ , or  $3$ .

12. (Original) The process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that in formula (II)  $R^2 = CH_3$ .

13. (Currently Amended) The process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in claim ~~11 or 12~~, characterized in that in formula (II)  $n = 2$ .

14. (Currently Amended) The process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 9 to 13~~claim 9, characterized in that the phenolic compound is a phenolic compound of the formula (I)



with  $R^1 = H$  or  $CH_3$ .

15. (Original) The process for preparing a Mannich base as claimed in claim 14, characterized in that in formula (I)  $R^1 = H$ .

16. (Currently Amended) A hardener component for two-component epoxy systems or polyurethane systems, characterized in that this hardener component comprises a Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~claim 1.

17. (Currently Amended) The use of a Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~claim 1 as a hardener for epoxy systems or polyurethane systems.

18. (Currently Amended) An epoxy system or polyurethane system comprising at least one Mannich base as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~claim 1.

19. (Currently Amended) An epoxy system or polyurethane system comprising at least one Mannich base and obtained by a process as claimed in ~~any one of claims 9 to 15~~claim 9.

20. (Currently Amended) A cured product obtained from an epoxy system or polyurethane system as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~.